Strategic Communication in the Feminine Hygiene and Beauty: A Comprehensive Plan for Effective Engagement and Influence

Mikhailia A. Williams
Mwill331@fiu.edu

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Strategic Communication in the Feminine Hygiene and Beauty: A Comprehensive Plan for Effective Engagement and Influence

By

Mikhailia Williams

Chair: Professor Aileen Izquierdo

A PROFESSIONAL PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION+JOURNALISM OF FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Fall 2022
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Executive Summary

The beauty and health industry is a multi-billion dollar market that includes companies that produce feminine hygiene products (Petruzzi, 22). These brands are looking for new ways to connect with their consumers and increase consumer loyalty. The Honey Pot Company, a plant-based and organic feminine hygiene brand, has an opportunity to increase its online brand sentiment by implementing a strategic communications plan for female consumers aged 15 to 50. The objective of this report is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the company's communication, marketing and brand strategies, as well as create a strategic communications plan to develop a positive brand sentiment for The Honey Pot company among female consumers. The study was conducted on a sample of female consumers who are aged 15 to 50 years old who use feminine hygiene products. It was able to identify indirect and direct competitors (Always, Stayfree, L. Organic etc.), consumer personalities, practice and behavior and consumer media and communication practices and preferences. After implementing the suggested strategy, the company can establish itself as a leader in the feminine hygiene market, with loyal consumers and a better way to face online crises.

Problem Statement

The Honey Pot Company was criticized on social media when consumers heard rumors of the company no longer being black-owned and noticed a change in packaging and key ingredients. Consumers started to compare ingredients listed on older bottles versus new bottles then assumed that the brand was no longer “100% organic” because
of the idea that Honey Pot had been sold to a larger company that prioritizes finding cheaper materials to save more money. The rumors and allegations caused customers to share their frustration online and some vowed to never buy the brand’s products again. Customers expressed how unprofessional it was to make such big changes without letting them know either through a press release or social media post. In addition, Honey Pot did not address their consumers’ concerns and questions until over a week later of being under fire on social media which caused consumers to be even more suspicious of the allegations set forth. To date, Honey Pot is still owned by the founder but has changed ingredients on one product only (feminine wash). Honey Pot’s challenge now is gaining the trust of its consumers by creating a positive brand-to-consumer communication line as well as developing a strategic communications plan that will be useful for brand awareness. This will aid with the retention of old customers and the acquisition of new customers.

**Situation Analysis**

**Organization Analysis**

The Honey Pot Company is a black-owned plant-based feminine care brand that produces a wide range of products such as pads, tampons, feminine wash, wipes, sprays, and probiotics (Honey Pot Journal). After suffering from a recurring vaginal infection for eight months, entrepreneur and founder of Honey Pot, Beatrice Dixon, was inspired by her grandmother’s recipe for a cure (Fisher 2020). According to its website, the brand aims to educate and provide resources that promote feminine health and
wellness. This enables women to have natural remedies that prevent or battle infections. Honey Pot started back in 2014 and became “mainstream” when retailer Target started putting the brand’s products on their store shelves in 2016. The brand prides itself on using organic, plant-based ingredients and its communication strategy includes emphasis on just such. The brand's products are infused with "whole foods" and include essential oils and extracts of Rosemary, Lavender, and Grapefruit (Honey Pot’s Our Story Journal). The products are also free of parabens, dioxins, gluten, phthalates, synthetic fragrances which is helpful to maintain a good pH level. Since 2016, the products have now reached the shelves of Walmart, Walgreens (select stores and online), CVS (select stores and online), Nutrition Smart and can be purchased through Amazon. Relevant to this communication plan, they utilize the following social networking sites: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and TikTok. The number of followers of Honey Pot has increased significantly over the past six months. Founder Beatrice Dixon attributes the rise in popularity to the company’s stable of African-American founders and the increasing number of people who seek out trustworthy brands (Fisher, 2020). The company’s various achievements have presented challenges. Some of these include the lack of a proper supply chain and the legacy software system that was unable to keep up with the demands of retailers (Ferguson, 2022). Initially, Honey Pot only sold its products through its website. Its rapid expansion into retail chains also contributed to its success. They currently have an Instagram following of 441K and a TikTok following of 345K. Honey Pot also has a Blog linked to their website and a podcast called The Honey Potluck Podcast where the
content is centered around informing and educating on all things feminine hygiene related. Some ways The Honey Pot Company communicates with their audience are through E-marketing, newsletters, social media, blogs, podcasts, and a Q&A section of their website called The Pulse (Honey Pot Journal). The Pulse is their version of Q&A where consumers can ask questions related to feminine hygiene and they will be answered by one of the experts on the team. According to their website, the team consists of Obstetrician- Gynecologists, Herbalists, Acupuncturists, and psychotherapists. Consumers can also visit their blog or Podcast which addresses topics like wellness, science, sex, and education on feminine hygiene care. Before the rumor crisis that Honey Pot faced, its social media content consisted of new product releases, memes, influencer videos, and more content surrounding wellness, science, and education. According to Camonghne Felix of The Cut, one week after the crisis happened, the CEO Bea Dixon released a video addressing the concerns and questions of the consumers online, then sometime later an official statement was released on their blog. Since then, the brand has kept consumers updated on changes that would affect consumers on their social media platforms. An example of this is when Honey Pot posted to their Instagram story that the price of products will be increased by about 10%.

**Consumer Analysis**

**Honey Post Consumer Analysis**

From various research, it is concluded that Honey Pot’s target age segment ranges from twelve to 55 years of age with a primary target emphasis on women between
21-35 years seeking feminine care solutions (Petruzzi, 2022). The race includes caucasians and minorities with primary emphasis on black women (Petruzzi, 2022). Since The Honey Pot company caters to women, all recommendations and analysis in this strategic plan will focus specifically on women with different buyer personas.

**Buyer Persona**

Customer 1: Mary Jane

- **Demographics:**
  - Age: 25
  - Marital Status: Single with no children
  - Location: Florida, United States
  - Education: Graduate degree
  - Annual Income: $75,000

- **Profession/Career:**
  - Job Title: Associate Sales Manager
  - Industry: Tech

- **Interest:**
  - Favorite Social Media Channel: Twitter
  - Favorite Feminine Product: Facial cleanser
  - Preferred method of brand communication: Email Newsletter

Customer 2: Marcia Wright

- **Demographics:**
Customer 1: John Doe

- Age: 35
- Marital Status: Married with 2 children
- Location: Arizona, United States
- Education: Undergraduate degree
- Annual Household Income: $100,000

**Profession/Career:**
- Job Title: Elementary Teacher
- Industry: Private School Education

**Interest:**
- Favorite Social Media Channel: YouTube
- Favorite Feminine Product: Hygiene products
- Preferred method of brand communication: TV commercial / social media ads

Customer 2: Sarah Smith

- Age: 19
- Marital Status: Single with no children
- Location: Virgina, United States
- Education: Associate degree
- Annual Income: $45,000

**Profession/Career:**
- Job Title: Licensed Optician
○ Industry: Optics medical field

● Interest:
○ Favorite Social Media Channel: Instagram
○ Favorite Feminine Product: Any make up product
○ Preferred method of brand communication: Social Media ads

Feminine Products Consumer Analysis

Factors that seem to influence consumers are gender, age and background. According to a marketing research from BSM Media. The purchasing power of women has significantly increased over the past few years (Priya, 2022). It is therefore important to analyze the various factors that influence their purchasing decisions. Social media platforms have become an integral part of our lives, and according to surveys, women are more likely to use them (Anderson, 2015). Female users prefer to connect with their friends through social media platforms, as it is very convenient and easy to reach them. They also conduct research before making a purchase, as they often watch the reviews of other users on the internet (Anderson, 2015). According to a survey conducted by the Consumer Council in 2016, over half of the respondents who shop online rely on the recommendations of their relatives and friends.

Market Analysis

According to Petruzzi’s research department, the feminine hygiene market, which includes sanitary napkins, menstrual cups, tampons, and vaginal health products,
makes up a significant share of the personal hygiene market worldwide (Petruzzi, 22). The concept behind feminine hygiene products is straightforward, however, the diversity of all that can be found in stores can be overpowering. There are traditional disposable tampons and sanitary napkins, as well as more environmentally friendly options such as menstrual cups, which are reusable. Some brands use organic ingredients which are also environmentally friendly. Sanitary napkins and liners account for the majority of dollar sales of feminine hygiene products, followed by tampons and vaginal treatments and in 2018, it is reported that about 61 million Americans used sanitary pads and napkins (Petruzzi, 22).

According to Roshan Priya of Allied Market research, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic caused a minimal impact on the feminine hygiene products market since feminine hygiene products fall under the category of essential products. The main effect that the pandemic had on the market is the slight slowdown of the production facilities by disturbing supply chains such as material suppliers and distributors (Priya, 2022).

**Beauty, Health & Personal Care Industry**

According to Global Data website, the key sectors in the health & beauty market are skincare, haircare, personal hygiene, make-up, oral hygiene, fragrances, feminine hygiene, male toiletries, and suncare. Skincare is the leading sector in the health & beauty market in 2022. The health and beauty industry is expected to experience value growth between 4% and 7% each year during the 2021-2026 period as consumer
purchasing behavior is returning to normal post the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Make-up and feminine hygiene are the health and beauty sectors that will observe the fastest compound annual growth rate during 2022-26, closely followed by oral hygiene and haircare. (Global Data, 2022)

The global personal care and beauty products market was valued at around USD 482.8 billion in 2021. It is expected to grow 7.7% during the next few years (Grand View Research, 2022). One of the main factors that is driving the market's growth is the increasing awareness about the appearance of women. The rise in the number of millennials is also contributing to the market's growth. The introduction of more natural and organic products is also expected to boost the market's development. Since beauty and personal care products are easily available through various sales channels such as pharmacies, specialty stores, supermarkets and beauty salons, it contributes to the growth of the market. With consumer awareness rising about using products that are
natural, organic, vegan, and at the same time, good for the planet has encouraged manufacturers to launch new offerings and expand their footprint (Grand View Research, 2022).

![Graph 2- Source: Grandviewresearch.com](image)

The researchers from Grand view research also concluded that supermarkets & hypermarkets have become popular for the purchase of beauty and personal care products as they offer a wide range of items under a single roof and are located near residential areas for convenient and easy accessibility. On the other hand, target marketing by companies and growing online shopping has been used to reach a wider audience has fueled segment growth. In addition to that, weighted discounts & seasonal offers provided by those online shopping platforms have helped to boost the communication efforts and sale of beauty and personal care items through this segment.
**Competitor Analysis**

Considering that Honey Pot is a fairly new company, it is assumed that the brand gets overlooked by some of the well-known brands. According to marketing research, some of the well-known brands in the US include Procter and Gamble (Leading products: The Always line of products), Johnson & Johnson (Leading products: Stayfree Secure and Stayfree Dry Max), and Kimberly-Clark (U by Kotex).

With more women being conscious of their bodies now more than before, the need for organic and plant-based products is high, and apart from Honey Pot, other companies cater to women in the organic feminine hygiene product brand. Some of those brands are Rael, Cora, L., and Natracare. Based on their websites and prior knowledge, all brands mentioned have their unique way of communicating with their target audience through various methods such as digital media, ads, newsletters, press releases, social media network usage, etc.
Leading Competitors in the Feminine Hygiene Market

Procter and Gamble’s Always

Always is a leading producer of sanitary pads that are used by women all around the world. The company, which is owned by P&G, introduced the product in 1984. Since then, they have been continuously working on developing new and innovative products that were very popular with their consumers. In 1985, they introduced winged pads, and in 1990, they introduced ultra-thin pads (Procter & Gamble, 2013). Although Always was known for its innovative products, its popularity among women aged 16 to 24 started to decline due to the increasing number of other companies that were able to compete with the brand. One of the main factors that prevented the company from gaining a significant market share was the competition from the “Stayfree” brand. Other companies such as the “Kotex” and “Lifestyle” sanitary pads have also started to threaten the company’s existence.

Johnson & Johnson’s Stayfree Secure

Johnson & Johnson's Stayfree brand is known for its innovative products. Introduced in 1971, Stayfree Mini and Maxi Pads were said to free women from bulky, visible sanitary products of the past. Or at least this is what the brand had to say about their product. In 2017, the company invited female athletes to participate in a video campaign that became very popular with young women. In addition, they launched several educational programs for children about women’s health during periods. The product is also meant
for pregnant women. Only about a third of women use pads during their nine-month pregnancy. (Brand Yuva, 2013). This gap in the market has created a huge opportunity for Stayfree. Its innovative product can lead to collaborations and new revenue for hospitals, as well as other related ventures. This is an extension of the company's brand, which helps it capitalize on the long-term potential of the market. To make its brand association easier, Stayfree also launched a comic book that featured information about menstruation (Ceil, 2018). The company also used social media to promote its products and make its brand successful.

**Kimberly-Clark’s Kotex**

As a part of the Kimberly-Clark group, Kotex has always been focused on providing women with the best possible hygiene. Its products such as ultra-light pads and maxi pads have gained a following due to their innovative nature. Through its online presence, the company was able to reach out to younger women. It was also able to engage with them through social media. In 2012, a study was conducted in North America regarding the attitudes of women toward feminine health. It revealed that 70% of the respondents believed it's time for society to change its attitude toward feminine health (Allchin, 2010). From the study the business decided to launch a new product range, which was designed to change the perceptions of women toward feminine health. The brand’s humorous advertising campaign featured slogans such as "I tied a tampon to my keychain so my brother wouldn't take my car," (Allchin, 2010).
Competitors in the Organic and Natural Feminine Hygiene Market

Rael
In 2017, three women from South Korea founded Rael, which is a startup focused on providing high-quality feminine care products (About Real, n.d.). According to their website, one of the biggest issues they encountered when they moved to the US was the lack of proper feminine care. Their website stated that in the US, most of the products that were used were made with harsh chemicals that could cause skin irritation. The founders wanted to create a solution that would allow women to feel comfortable and perform at their best. They partnered with cutting-edge Korean technology and high-quality organic materials to create their own feminine care products (About Real, n.d.). The goal of Rael is to make sure that women have the best possible cycle care. According to their website, the company currently has 19 countries in its global network. Rael works with various partners to provide education and provide period care to women and girls in the community (About Real, n.d.). They also collect feminine hygiene kits and distribute them to those in need. Rael's goal is to help build a world where everyone has access to safe period care.

Cora
Since it was first launched in 2016, Cora has been able to establish themselves as a leading brand in the natural period care industry. According to their website, years ago a young Kenyan girl told Molly Hayward, the founder of Cora, that she would stay home from school because she couldn’t afford to buy period products (Our story, n.d.). This
experience inspired her to start the company, which believes that every body should have the same comfort and protection during their period. The brand makes it known in their communication efforts that with every purchase a consumer makes, they provide period care and body literacy resources to someone who would otherwise go without (Our story, n.d.). They have recently revamped their entire brand look and feel. According to their website, Cora's rebranding highlights their commitment that "everybody deserves comfort, however you flow." While their new branding may look different, they assure that their product promise still stands true—"comfortable period and body care that has you covered, clean and simple."

**L.**

L. was founded in 2015 by Talia Frenkel and according to their website, they are committed to making high-quality period care accessible to everybody. Their products are made with clean and simple ingredients that won't "stress out" their consumers' budget (L. Our story, n.d.). They use organic cotton for their products, which is not included in the market's price of organic products. Every year, L. provides grants to various non-profit organizations and employment opportunities that help women around the world access the necessary resources for menstrual health education and care (L. Our story, n.d.). The brand is also a certified B Corp. As a certified B Corp, they are responsible for their actions and decisions. This means they have to consider the impact of their actions on people and the environment. That certification shows that they are taking the necessary steps to reduce their waste which their consumers can
appreciate. They use organic ingredients and are committed to using only recycled paper and plastic (L. Our story, n.d.). All this and more is included in the brand’s communication messaging to consumers.

The Honey Pot Company SWOT Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS</th>
<th>WEAKNESSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Rewards system</td>
<td>• Lack of targeted communication practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Organic and plant based products</td>
<td>• New company/not a well known brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Active social Media Presence Panel of experts to answer questions related to feminine hygiene</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITIES</th>
<th>THREATS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Utilizing social media presence by leveraging the 441K IG followers the brand has</td>
<td>• Other brand competitors with similar target audience and products makes it harder to achieve customer loyalty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creating a positive brand sentiment</td>
<td>• Too many options of feminine hygiene brands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Targeting and relating to minority communities as a minority owned brand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Honey Pot Company rewards system offers an incentive whenever a consumer purchases a product. This helps with customer retention and customer loyalty. The fact that their products are organic and plant based appeals to a target audience that wants to support brands that are producing products considered good for the environment and for women's bodies. Honey Pots active social media presence means that they are engaging with their consumers which will help to build a positive business to consumer (B2C) relationship. With their panel of experts to answer questions related to feminine hygiene, consumers will trust the brand and their products knowing that the research, blogs and Q&amp;A are being done by professionals in the field of women hygiene/body.</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weakness</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Honey Pot Company’s lack of targeted communication practice is considered a weakness because consumers won't be able to identify with the brand if the communication efforts are not targeted to them. Another weakness is that the company is relatively new and not well known. Potential consumers could skip over the option of purchasing feminine hygiene products from The Honey Pot Company because they</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
have no knowledge of the brand in the market. According to Sam Killip from Attest, brand awareness is a vital part of any organization’s marketing strategy to gain the trust of potential customers and increase sales. It helps them make informed decisions and improve the efficiency of their business.

**Opportunities**

The brand has a great opportunity to leverage the 441K IG followers by utilizing their social media platform. This creates more opportunities for their followers to engage with them and can increase customer loyalty and customer retention. Creating a positive brand sentiment is another opportunity worth looking into. This can be done by asking for feedback in different ways, using influencer marketing and staying on top of crises when they do occur. This will cause their customers to feel valued and understood. As a minority owned brand, targeting and relating to minority communities will create a bond between the brand and those communities. Aiding with customer loyalty and gaining new customers via word of mouth from existing consumers.

**Threats**

There are many other brand competitors with similar target audiences and products which makes it harder for The Honey Pot Company to achieve customer loyalty. One of the most important factors that a company can consider when it comes to building its brand is customer loyalty. This is because it allows its existing customers to continue buying its products. Due to the existence of so many different feminine hygiene brands,
it is hard for Honey Pot to compete against its competitors hence this being another threat to the brand.

**Research Objectives**

The goal of the primary research is to identify the areas of importance that the target audience has when it comes to the feminine hygiene product shopping experience. It will also look into the various factors that influence the purchase habits of the consumers. The research will identify and confirm competitors in this feminine hygiene market as well as consumers in store vs online purchase habits. The research will also look into the various media platforms that are appropriate for executing a strategic communication plan or campaign. In addition, it will explore the ways in which young consumers interact with brands online and their opinion on the importance of transparency in a brand.

**Methodology**

A 20 question survey was distributed through various forms of media, such as social media, email, and word-of-mouth. Due to the limited amount of time that was available for research, a snowball sample was used. The goal of a snowball sampling study is to identify potential subjects. This recruitment method involves asking participants to identify other individuals. The ideal age for the participants was 15 to 50. They were chosen because of their interest in feminine hygiene products and of the age of menstruation as discussed in the secondary research. No respondents were outside of that age range and were eliminated from the result collection. The inclusion of women
aged 15 to 18 in the program was seen as a positive development for the brand. It allows it to develop a stronger relationship with its consumers. Through this research, Honey Pot will be able to create a desirable want for young consumers before they reach their purchasing power. The program's youngest participants were eliminated because they were less likely to have a similar desire without their parents' approval. Fifty respondents began the consumer practice and behavior survey and all fifty respondents completed it. The survey was conducted over two weeks. It was conducted according to the research protocol and the reasons for want of participation were disclosed in the first page. No identifiable information was collected from respondents. The survey was designed in three parts: Consumer demographics, consumer media practice and behavior and consumer media and communication practices and Preferences communication preferences. The full survey is represented in the appendix.

**Findings**

**Consumer Demographics**

The individuals were surveyed about their interest in and knowledge about feminine hygiene products and brands. The sample was composed of individuals who were 15 to 50 years old. All of the respondents identified as women, and all of them are residing in the United States. Eighty - two percent of the collected sample were of the ages 21 - 30. Ten percent were between the ages of 15 - 20, six percent 31 - 40 and two percent 41 - 50. The survey revealed that seventy - eight percent of the participating individuals
identified as Black or African American, twenty - eight percent Hispanic or Latinx and six percent White or Caucasian.

Consumer Practice and Behavior

When asked what feminine hygiene brand was used by the participants, as predicted, Always by Proctor and Gamble was the lead with sixty - two percent. The Honey Pot Company was second with forty - four percent and L. Organic in third with twenty two percent. From this it is imperative to note that in second and third place are both brands with organic and natural products. This can be looked at from a standpoint that women are beginning to choose feminine hygiene products with health benefits and less risk factors. In Honey Pot’s case the finding from this question puts them in a better standing than their other competitors. Other competitors being U by Kotex with ten percent of participant use, Stayfree at eight percent and Rael and Caress at four percent.

Graph 4
Only six percent of the survey respondents are actually purchasing feminine hygiene products online. Others stated that they prefer buying them in stores. This segment of the market will help the Honey Pot Company grow. The question of how often you switch the brand of hygiene product that you use was asked in this section and the results are as follows. According to the survey, sixty percent of consumers never switch brands when it comes to hygiene products. It's believed that once consumers find a good one, they will stick with it. This aids with consumer loyalty to that particular brand.

The survey also revealed that most consumers are more likely to try new products if they have a friend or relative who recommends it. This is because they believe that suggestions and reviews from friends and family are very important when it comes to buying products. Another thing the respondents found important is research on the brand and products before purchase. The goal of purchasing research is to improve profitability and ensure that the decisions are made according to the best possible
conditions. Some of the factors that can be considered when it comes to purchasing research include: quality, quantity, user experience and price.

Media and Communication Practices and Preferences

According to a survey, over sixty percent of the respondents interact with various brands online. On the other hand, sixty six percent of the women who are involved in the Feminine hygiene industry are also very likely to engage with these brands through social media platforms. The question was asked: How often do you engage with brands
on social media? This has to do with how often the participant follows a brand and likes, shares or comments on their posted content. Thirty-two percent responded that they sometimes engage with brands on social media, twenty-two percent responded most of the time, twenty-two percent responded rarely, fourteen percent responded with never and ten percent responded everyday. The same question was asked but for feminine hygiene brands in particular. Forty percent responded never, thirty-eight percent responded rarely, sixteen percent responded sometimes, two percent-most of the time, one percent-everyday.

When it comes to gaining information about those brands, based on the survey results, consumers primarily get their information from social media platforms, word of mouth, television, internet search and brand websites.

When communicating with brands the participants preferred methods of communication are through social media, television commercials and online newsletters. The same results were seen when participants were asked to select their preferred methods of communication with feminine hygiene brands.
Brand transparency is a measure of how a brand shows itself to its various stakeholder groups. It involves being open and genuine to its customers and internal employees. Participants were asked on a scale from 1-10, how important is brand transparency? 1 being least important. Over sixty percent responded with 10. When it comes to providing feedback to a brand about their product, over seventy percent found it to be useful. Below are some of the respondents’ reasons why.

- “Feedback helps the company perfect their product, and make it just right for their consumer.”
- “It is necessary for them to make adjustments that will appeal to the majority”
- “So they know if it is effective or not”
- “They can improve based on consumer insights”
- “I feel like if I am using the brand that I should have a say in it. Because it’s going in my body and I would appreciate a company that cares about my opinion.”
- “I feel that my concerns are valid and they are mostly the same concerns as other consumers.”
- “Maybe my feedback will help improve the product or it can motivate them to keep up the good work”
- “When I provide feedback, it’s with the hope that something will be done to supply my wants and needs. So I do think it’s useful to be allowed the opportunity to give a brand feedback on their products.”
- “Some brands are really good at listening to their customers”
On the other hand, here are some of the responses from the twenty-eight percent that do not find providing feedback to the brand useful. These responses are included to give a different perspective and can be used in the brand’s communication effort to change the mind of these consumers.

- “Because they often don’t see it”
- “I don’t think they will see it or reply”
- “Don’t feel as though feedback will matter or make a difference”
- “No, because I do not feel that my individual input on social media reaches the person who cares enough to cause changes in the products or services.”

**Strategy**

**Strategic Communication Objectives**

- Influence and develop a positive perception and attitude in consumers about the brand and measuring it by checking the brand’s sentiment online.
- Increase the target audience’s awareness in one quarter by using influencer marketing about the brand and its products.
- Develop structured opportunities for consumers to provide feedback to the brand.
- In one month, create and execute a marketing campaign that is organic.
- Generate 2.2M social media impressions across Instagram and Facebook by the following quarter.
• Measure impact and report results based on mutually established KPIs

**Target Profile**

The objective of this campaign is to reach out to the women between the ages of 18 and 45 who are struggling with their feminine hygiene needs in the US. For the purpose of this strategic communications plan they are referred to as "unloyal menstruated women" (UMW). They are not loyal to a brand, but they would be willing to try new products or convince their friends and family to do the same. The young women who are part of this demographic are driven by the social media trends that they are constantly following. They are also interested in learning about the latest beauty and health products that are available. They would be willing to share their purchases with their friends and family if they could. When it comes to health and beauty, they are not always aware of the trends of the moment. They are familiar larger feminine hygiene brands with years of being in business and customer reviews such as Always, U by Kotex and Stayfree but they are now looking for more sustainable options that pose less risk to their body and can identify with the brand and its values. They usually are not the type however to actively seek out this information, neither are they the ones to go to the store and evaluate all brand options on the shelves. UMWs mainly shops in-store however they appreciate e-commerce sites that offer rewards or donate to a cause when purchasing their products. This is an added value for them.
Unloyal Menstruated Women are consumers with needs of comfort when doing anything, they enjoy being secure and rarely take risks. They respond positively to brands who actively care and work towards being transparent with their consumers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hobbies:</th>
<th>Social media browsing</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spends quality time with friends and family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engaged in some sustainable actions (recycling, upcycling, use of metal straws and reusable shopping bags)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic:</th>
<th>18 to 40</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seeking or have higher education (Associates, Bachelors, Masters, etc. )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Income: $15,000 - $100,00 annual income</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brands They Like:</th>
<th>Always, U by Kotex, L. Organics, Rael, Stayfree, Tampax</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How they shop:</th>
<th>In-store (mainly)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media they consume:</th>
<th>Facebook, Instagram (heavily), Twitter, Pinterest, TikTok, Youtube</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy

Positioning Statement: The Honey Pot Company is a black-owned plant-based feminine care brand that produces a wide range of products such as pads, tampons, feminine wash, wipes, sprays, and probiotics. They are for the women who want more security with their feminine hygiene products.

All strategies will revolve around transparency, authenticity and the benefits of organic products to create brand awareness and generate consumer loyalty.

Strategies

- Create a “Did You Know” IG live segment that airs biweekly to include facts about the brand, its products and a Q & A session with an feminine hygiene expert.
- Create a buzz by engaging diverse women influencers with a niche of women empowerment to share Honey Pots products with their online community.
- Create user-generated content to drive interest for the brand and products and that the brand can use on their social media channels.
- Create a designated section on the brand’s website that encourages anonymous feedback and post responses from the brand, showing that the consumer’s feedback matters.
Tactics

- Every two weeks, a designated personnel from the marketing division of The Honey Pot Company will host an Instagram live for 30 mins to an hour.
  - Majority of the time will be used to introduce facts about the brand and its products. This will be followed by a quick Q & A session with an feminine hygiene expert from the company.

- Activate a network of influencers to capture retail & lifestyle photos promoting the Honey Pot products and its benefits.
  - Influencer Selection:
    - The brand can either recruit the influencers themselves or hire an influencer marketing agency to do the recruitment and selection.
    - 30 women influencers with a niche of women empowerment and any other agreed upon criteria will be selected.
  - Messaging: Influencers will use custom hashtags and key word messaging including but not limited to:
    - “The Honey Pot company is transparent with their ingredients so you'll know what you're using on your body”
    - “The Honey Pot Company offers plant-based feminine care brand that produces a wide range of products”
    - The Honey Pot Company is for the girl who wants more security with their feminine hygiene products.
- "Use Code ORGANICHP online for 10% off on 1 feminine hygiene product. Offer ends December 31st"
- #TheHoneyPotWay #HoneyPot #TakePrideInYourMenstrualHealth

○ Content: Each influencer will be tasked with sharing 1 Instagram Story (with a product link to any Honey Pots website) to show the shopping experience and 1 Instagram feed post (static or reel) to showcase their excitement for finding a product that is good for them and the environment in a lifestyle setting.

- Retail post - Instagram Story: Influencer will capture photos shopping for Honey Pot products online or in stores, to share on social media using photo guidelines, keyword messaging, and hashtags. Influencers will purchase the product(s) with a $30 limit and will be reimbursed in total influencer compensation.

- Lifestyle post: Influencers will create lifestyle photos to post on social media to share their excitement for finding a product that is good for them and the environment at home Old Navy will have the rights to all photos & videos to use on their social and digital channels.

- Distribute a feedback survey to participants to get details about shopping experience, feedback on product(s), and willingness to recommend.

● Design designated section on the brand’s website
- In biweekly newsletters encourage anonymous feedback from consumers
- Post responses from the brand
- Highlight this in social media posts biweekly.

### Influencer Campaign Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Start influencer outreach and vets potential influencers</td>
<td>11/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved influencers are launched and given communication details.</td>
<td>11/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidate influencer content for Shopping Story for approval</td>
<td>12/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shares any feedback, revisions or approvals on content to influencers</td>
<td>12/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping Stories Live</td>
<td>12/10-12/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidates influencer content for lifestyle posts for approval</td>
<td>12/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shares any feedback, revisions or approvals on content to influencers</td>
<td>12/13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifestyle Posts Live</td>
<td>12/15-12/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milestone</td>
<td>Dates</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidate influencer content for Shopping Story for approval</td>
<td>12/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create and evaluate recap report</td>
<td>1/20/2023</td>
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### Instagram Live Did You Know Campaign Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>December 1-31</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thurs</th>
<th>Fri</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Post Reminder about IG live on social media</td>
<td>IG Live - Promote Tampons and facts about the ingredients - save to IG feed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Recap last IG live on social media</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Post Reminder about IG live on social media</td>
<td>IG Live - Promote feminine wash and facts about the ingredients - save to IG</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Recap last IG live on social media</td>
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**Estimated Budget**

Tatic: In store and online Influencer Social Spotter

Deliverables: 1 Instagram Post (Static or Reel), 1 Instagram Story

Number of Influencers: 30

Cost Per Influencer: $450

Total Cost: 30 x $450 = 13,500

**Evaluation Plan**

Anticipated Results and Evaluation Standards

The Honey Pot Company marketing team will measure placements, potential impressions, engagement, and provide a comprehensive final overview report upon completion of the influencer communication plan. The evaluation standards and anticipated results are 30 Influencers with 5,000-100,000 followers, 1 IG Story with product link or shown in store section, 1 Instagram Post (static or reel), 30+ shares on Instagram feed, 30+ Instagram Stories, 30+ shares on Facebook, Twitter or TikTok, 2.2 Million+ potential social media impressions and a 2%+ Instagram Engagement Rate. For the Instagram live campaign, an average viewer count of 1000 is expected at the end of each month.
Limitation

The findings of the study were useful in identifying consumer behavior, media consumptions and preferences, personalities and brand perception. However, it also encountered various limitations. The main limitation of the study was sample size selection due to lack of time needed for research. For instance, instead of having 50 participants, the study should have had a more representative collection of 100. Another limitation was that another method of research could have been used to gain more insight on buyers behavior when it comes to the feminine hygiene or beauty and health industry. Even though the survey gave a good insight, an interview would have allowed the respondents to expand on their methods, behavior and common practices when purchasing. Also, some of the respondents who took the survey but not all respondents answered every question. Lastly, due to the company's relatively new start in the feminine hygiene market, it was not feasible to thoroughly research The Honey Pot Company.

Conclusion

The Honey Pot company is an organic and plant based feminine hygiene brand that was criticized on social media because of lack of transparency and an effective strategic communications plan. The research done has shown that it can compete against the major competitors in the feminine hygiene market. The brand can also establish itself as a leader in the organic and plant-based market. But this can only be achieved by
implementing a strategic communication plan that will help to develop a better relationship with existing consumers to build consumer loyalty, and potentially vet other consumers.
References


P&G Brands. Who we are | P&G values and principles. (2013). Retrieved from https://africa.pg.com/who-we-are/


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Appendix A: Survey Response
What is your racial or ethnic identity? (Select all that apply.)
50 responses

- African-American/Black: 39 (78%)
- Hispanic/Latinx: 14 (28%)
- Middle Eastern: 0 (0%)
- American Indian/Alaskan Native: 0 (0%)
- Asian: 0 (0%)
- Pacific Islander: 0 (0%)
- White: 3 (6%)

Where do you buy your feminine hygiene products? (Check all that apply.)
50 responses

- In store: 50 (100%)
- Online: 3 (6%)
- I do not buy feminine hygiene products: 0 (0%)

What feminine hygiene brand do you use? (Select all that apply.)
50 responses

- U by Kotex: 5 (10%)
- L. Organic: 11 (22%)
- Always: 0 (0%)
- Asana: 31 (62%)
- Rael Organic: 2 (4%)
- The Honey Pot Company: 22 (44%)
- Carefree: 2 (4%)
- Diva Cup: 1 (2%)
- Tampax: 1 (2%)
- Carefree: 1 (2%)
- Walgreens brand: 1 (2%)
- Lady suite: 1 (2%)
- Store brand ex. Equate and Case: 1 (2%)
- Corna: 1 (2%)
- Always pure cotton: 1 (2%)
- Caress: 1 (2%)
How often do you switch the brand of hygiene product that you use?
50 responses

- Every Month: 66%
- Every 3 Months: 12%
- Twice a year: 8%
- Once a year: 10%
- Never: 8%

Have you heard of the brand The Honey Pot Company?
50 responses

- Yes: 86%
- No: 14%

Do you engage with brands on social media? Ex: Follow, like, share, comment, etc
50 responses

- Yes: 66%
- No: 34%
Do you engage with FEMININE HYGIENE BRANDS on social media? Ex: Follow, like, share, comment, etc
50 responses

How often do you engage with brands on social media? Ex: Follow, like, share, comment, etc
50 responses

How often do you engage with FEMININE HYGIENE brands on social media? Ex: Follow, like, share, comment, etc
50 responses
Where do you primarily get information about feminine hygiene brands? (Select all that apply.)

50 responses

On a scale from 1-10, how likely are you to do research about a product before purchasing it? 1 being least likely

50 responses

On a scale from 1-10, how likely are you to try a new brand recommended by friend or family member? 1 being least likely

50 responses
On a scale from 1-10, how important is brand transparency? 1 being least important

50 responses

What method of communication is preferred for a FEMININE HYGIENE BRAND to connect with you? (Select all that apply.)

50 responses

What method of communication is preferred for a brand to connect with you? (Select all that apply.)

50 responses
Why or why not?

Feedback helps the company perfect their product, and make it just right for their consumer.
It lets the brand know what they are doing well and what they need to improve on
Because it is necessary for them to make adjustments that will appeal to the majority
To give brands real reviews to know how their product is really affecting consumers
N/a
I’m likely to stop using the brand before commenting. I’m likely to only offer feedback if the products are extremely helpful or harmful.
So they can see what needs improvement on their product or what could stay the same
So they know if it is effective or not
To know the outcome of using the product
They can improve based on consumer insights
Because they often don’t see it
Yes, I feel like if I am using the brand that I should have a say in it. Because it's going in my body and I would appreciate a company that cares about my opinion.
It helps them make their product better
Helps the brand know what to improve on or keep the same

Improvements can be catered to the audience

I don’t think they will see it or reply

No, because I’m skeptical that they would see my message and respond to my feedback

Companies may be able to provide adjustments based on consumer needs

So they can better their product

I never really thought about it.

don’t feel as though feedback will matter or make a difference

I’m not sure if they will respond or notice my comment.

I feel that my concerns are valid and they are mostly the same concerns as other consumers.

To let them know what they can improve on as a company

How often do brands really make changes when few people have feedback/criticism?

You’ll know what the product could help you out with

To get the real answers

Because it helps with live feedback

Providing feedback helps brands become better and more efficient for its customers.

Maybe my feedback will help improve the product or it can motivate them to keep up the good work

Na

It allows me to see what people like me think

I find it useful to provide feedback to a brand about their products because it is good for them to know what people think. This way to can see what they can improve or even change.

No because I do not feel that my individual input on social media reaches the person who cares enough to cause changes in the products or services.

It helps the brand identify what their audience needs

waste of time

So that they can understand the consumers needs. What they are doing right and what they could improve if needed.

So they can improve

To let people know what my feedback is. Usually only care to write reviews when I like a product/ if it works for me.
When I provide feedback, it’s with the hope that something will be done to supply my wants and needs. So I do think it’s useful to be allowed the opportunity to give a brand feedback on their products.

I feel that it’s unlikely for my voice to actually be heard. I’m only one person

I think feedback is useful I just don’t always know how and where I should to do it to reach the brand and I don’t make it a priority to take the time to provide feedback.

some brands are really good at listening to their customers

So they can make the product better for the comfort and accessibility to females

To let other people know that it may or may not work for me but it could work for someone else

It’s useful

It’s beneficial

It always seems useful

N/A

They can gain customer insights
Mikhailia Williams is a graduate student at Florida International University attaining a Master of Science degree in Global Strategic Communication upon the completion of this professional project. She was born and raised in Montego Bay, Jamaica and migrated to Miramar, FL in 2014. She received her undergraduate degree in Public Relations, Advertising and Applied Communications from Florida International University and currently works in influencer marketing with a niche marketing agency in South Florida. While at this agency, she has had a hand in creating and executing marketing campaigns for companies such as Jazwares, MGA Entertainment, ASH, HP and SeaWorld etc.

As a FIU student, Mikhailia was involved in multiple service clubs and participated in numerous volunteer opportunities. She was the secretary of sustainability in FIUs SGA, a Homecoming Intern and Membership coordinator for SISTUHs, Inc. She has maintained a 4.0 GPA in all required program courses thus far and has been invited to join Phi Kappa Phi Honors Society for her academic achievements.

As a young professional, Mikhailia values the life lessons that can be taught in school and outside of school. Lessons of courage, tenacity, motivation, emotional intelligence can be beneficial in all aspects of life and she hopes to carry those values in her future endeavors.